

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

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COMIDEASTFOR

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 7621

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, JO, US

SUBJ: VISIT OF USS ELMER MONTGOMERY

1. SUMMARY: IN FIRST US NAVY SHIP VISIT TO JORDAN IN 7 1/2 YEARS, SIX-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO JORDAN BY COMIDEASTFOR AND FIVE-DAY VISIT BY DESTROYER ESCORT USS ELMER MONTGOMERY WERE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL IN PROMOTION OF US-JORDANIAN RELATIONS AND AS DEMONSTRATION OF US MILITARY PRESENCE IN MIDEAST. WE RECOMMEND VISIT AGAIN NEXT AUTUMN FOLLOWED BY UP TO TWO VISITS PER YEAR DEPENDING ON AREA SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY WISHES TO REPEAT ITS APPRECIATION ALREADY CONVEYED SEPARATELY TO COMIDEASTFOR AND USS ELMER MONTGOMERY FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING REPRESENTATION IN FINEST TRADITION OF US NAVY AND FOR THEIR SIGNAL CONTRIBUTION TO ACCOMPLISHMENT OF US OBJECTIVE IN JORDAN. COMBINATION OF EXEMPLARY JAF RECEPTION AND FULLY RECIPROCATED RESPONSE MADE FOR HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL VISIT.

3. JAF WENT ALL OUT TO GIVE SHIP EXTREMELY WARM RECEPTION.

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CHIEF OF STAFF LT. GEN. BIN SHAKER HOSTED DINNER FOR OFFICERS

AND ALONG WITH MRS. BIN SHAKER ATTENDED VARIETY OF SHIP EVENTS. JAF INSISTED ON ARRANGING AND PAYING BILLS FOR SIGHTSEEING TRIPS FOR VIRTUALLY ENTIRE CREW TO PETRA AND JERASH/AJLUN. JAF ALSO SENT FULL 200-PIECE JAF BAND TO AQABA TO PERFORM BEATING OF RETREAT CEREMONY. KING HUSSEIN PLANNED TO ATTEND COMIDEASTFOR LUNCHEON BUT BECAUSE OF UNEXPECTED VISIT BY SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, HE WAS RELUCTANTLY FORCED TO CANCEL.

4. THE WARM RECEPTION ACCORDED THE SHIP BY JAF WAS IMMEDIATELY REFLECTED BY ALL THE OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL ACTIONS OF CDR M.J. BROWN AND HIS FINE CREW. FOR FIVE FULL DAYS, IT WAS A CASE OF EACH SIDE TRYING TO OUTDO THE OTHER IN EXPRESSING WARM FRIENDSHIP AND HOSPITALITY, AND BOTH SIDES SUCCEEDED BEYOND ALL EXPECTATIONS.

5. PUBLICITY COVERAGE WAS ALSO EXCELLENT; TV AND PRESS EMPHASIS WAS SUFFICIENT TO HIGHLIGHT VISIT BUT WISELY BALANCED WITH GENERAL NEWS TO MINIMIZE DANGER OF TOO HIGH A PROFILE. EXEMPLARY CONDUCT OF SHIP'S CREW (THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS) AND WEARING OF CIVILIAN CLOTHES OUTSIDE AQABA AREA WERE ALSO HELPFUL.

6. POLITICALLY, WE VIEWED SHIP VISIT AS FURTHER REINFORCEMENT OF OUR POLICY OF SUPPORT FOR MODERATE JORDANIAN REGIME DURING TIME OF DIFFICULT AND CHANGING CONDITIONS IN MIDEAST. WHILE GOJ GAVE EVERY APPEARANCE OF WELCOMING VISIT, THERE WAS SOME TALK DURING VISIT LINKING COMIDEASTFOR WITH WIDESPREAD RUMORS US CONTEMPLATING CONTINGENCY INTERVENTION IN PERSIAN GULF AREA. IN GENERAL, WE BELIEVE THAT JORDAN (WILLINGLY AT THIS POINT) PAYS SOME POLITICAL PRICE VIS-A-VIS ITS NEIGHBORS AND, TO SOME EXTENT, ITS OWN POPULATION FOR CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITH US. THE OTHER CONSIDERATION IS THAT JORDANIANS ONLY KNOW HOW TO GO ALL-OUT FOR A VISIT OF THIS NATURE AND AS A RESULT WE WILL NEED TO ASSESS CAREFULLY FREQUENCY OF OUR VISITS.

7. AS AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED WITH ADMIRAL HANKS, WE RECOMMEND NEXT VISIT FOR OCT/NOV 75, WITH FLAGSHIP LASALLE. THEREAFTER, WE WOULD CONSIDER UP TO TWO VISITS ANNUALLY, DEPENDING UPON JORDANIAN AND MIDEAST PREOCCUPATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES AT THE TIME.

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